CALIFORNIA FIBROID CENTER

Warning Signs of Severe Adenomyosis Pain in Women

Understanding the warning signs that should never be dismissed.

The Silent Struggle: When Pain Becomes the Norm

Dismissed as "Normal"

Many women are told that severe period pain is simply something to endure — a message that silences and isolates those who are genuinely suffering.

Delayed Diagnosis

The normalisation of suffering is one of the leading reasons adenomyosis takes years to diagnose, allowing the condition to worsen over time.

Signals Worth Heeding

Persistent, severe pain and heavy bleeding are not inevitable — they are signals of an underlying condition that deserves investigation.

DEFINITION

What is Adenomyosis?

Adenomyosis occurs when tissue similar to the uterine lining grows **into the muscular wall of the uterus** itself — causing the uterus to become enlarged, inflamed, and chronically tender.

It is distinct from two other commonly confused conditions:

- **Endometriosis** — tissue grows *outside* the uterus
- **Fibroids** — benign muscle growths within the uterine wall

The Hidden Impact: Adenomyosis and Your Uterus

2–3×

Uterine Enlargement

The uterus can grow to double or even triple its normal size as adenomyosis progresses.

1 in 10

Women Affected

Adenomyosis is more common than many realise, yet remains significantly underdiagnosed.

30–50

Peak Age Range

As an oestrogen-dependent condition, it most commonly affects women during their reproductive years.

This enlargement and chronic inflammation are the root cause of debilitating pain and heavy bleeding — both of which should prompt urgent medical attention.

WARNING SIGN 1

Unbearable Pelvic Pain

Severe Cramping

Persistent, intense cramping that does not ease with standard over-the-counter pain relief.

Pain Beyond Periods

Discomfort that occurs outside menstruation — during sex, with bowel movements, or throughout the month.

Tender, Enlarged Uterus

A uterus that is noticeably enlarged and sensitive to the touch, indicating significant internal inflammation.

WARNING SIGN 2

Debilitatingly Heavy Periods

Heavy menstrual bleeding — known as **menorrhagia** — is one of the most disruptive symptoms of severe adenomyosis. It goes far beyond a typical heavy period.

- Periods lasting **longer than 7 days**
- Soaking through pads or tampons **every hour** for several consecutive hours
- Passing **large blood clots**, often a quarter-size or bigger

⚠ Bleeding this severe can lead to iron-deficiency anaemia, fatigue, and a significantly reduced quality of life.

WARNING SIGN 3

Painful Intercourse & Other Symptoms

Dyspareunia

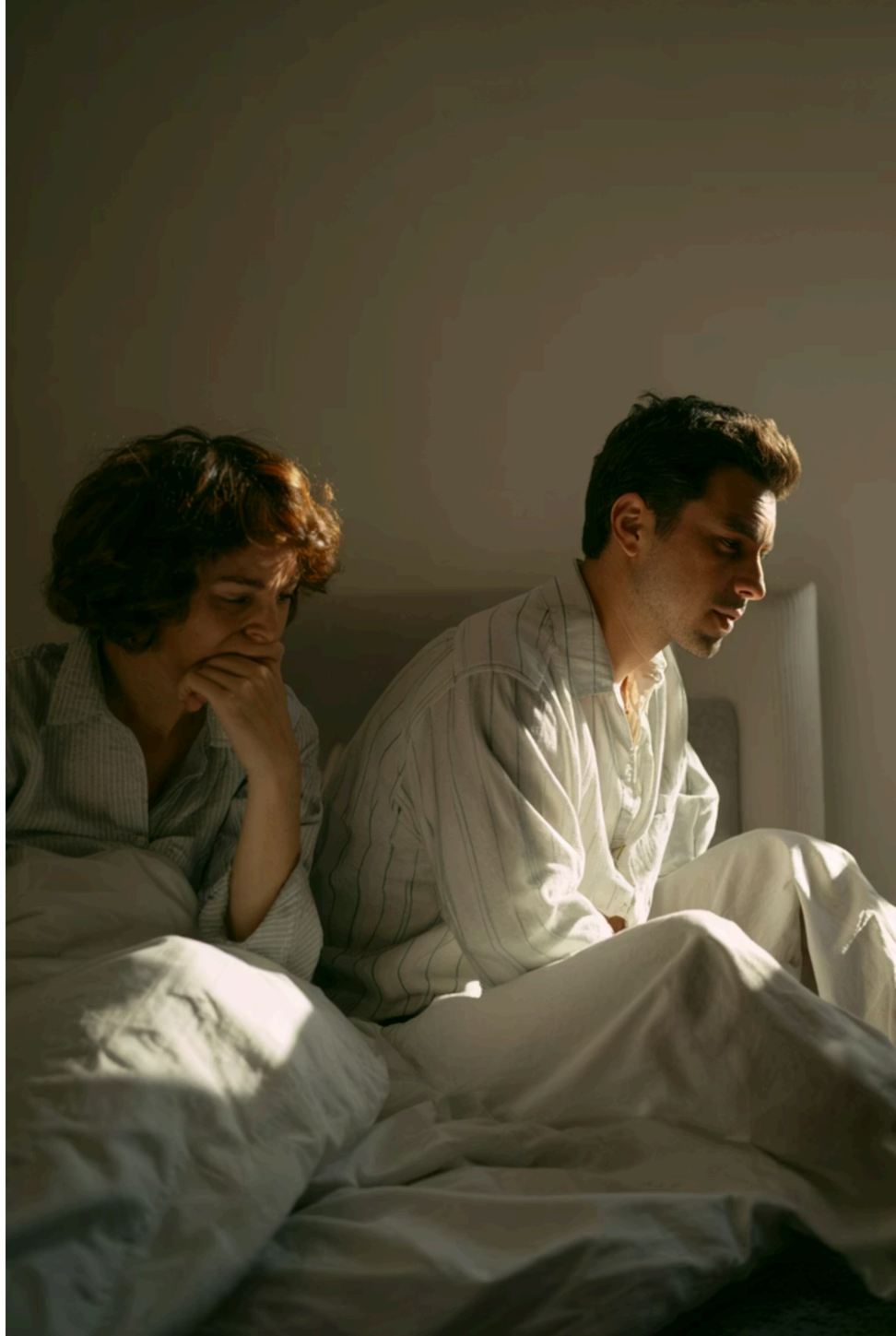
Pain during or after sexual intercourse is a common yet frequently unaddressed symptom that deeply affects relationships and well-being.

Pressure & Bloating

A persistent sense of heaviness, pressure, or bloating in the lower abdomen — often described as feeling "full" or swollen.

Urinary Frequency

An enlarged uterus can press directly on the bladder, causing increased urgency and frequency of urination.



DIAGNOSIS

The Diagnostic Challenge

For decades, a definitive adenomyosis diagnosis was only possible after a **hysterectomy** — leaving countless women without answers during their reproductive years.

Today, advances in imaging are changing that:

- **Transvaginal ultrasound** — increasingly reliable for identifying adenomyosis markers
- **MRI** — the gold standard for detailed assessment, especially in complex cases

Earlier detection means earlier treatment — and a meaningfully better quality of life.

Don't Ignore the Signs: Seeking Help is Vital

Painful, heavy periods are *not* normal

Persistent symptoms that interfere with daily life warrant a medical conversation — full stop.

Speak up about all symptoms

Pelvic pain, excessive bleeding, and pain during sex are all worth raising with a healthcare professional.

Act early

Early diagnosis and appropriate management can significantly reduce suffering and protect long-term health.

Take Control of Your Health

Advances in medicine mean that adenomyosis is increasingly treatable. The first step is advocating for yourself.

Your Pain is Valid

Suffering is not inevitable. Severe symptoms deserve investigation, not dismissal.

Speak Openly

Describe every symptom honestly to your doctor — nothing is too small or too embarrassing to mention.

Treatment Exists

From hormonal therapies to minimally invasive procedures, more options are available than ever before.

Advocate Firmly

If you feel unheard, seek a second opinion. You deserve a healthcare team that listens.

You are not alone — and you don't have to simply endure. Knowledge is the first step to reclaiming your health.